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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/550,869	08/09/2006	Stewart Kenyon Willis	Stolt-56	3428
36703	7590	08/04/2009		
C. JAMES BUSHMAN 5851 San Felipe SUITE 975 HOUSTON, TX 77057			EXAMINER ANDRISH, SEAN D	
			ART UNIT 3672	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 08/04/2009	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/550,869

Applicant(s)

WILLIS, STEWART KENYON

Examiner

SEAN D. ANDRISH

Art Unit

3672

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 April 2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 - 13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 - 13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/ICE)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claims 4, 6, and 8 are objected to because of the following informalities:
 - a. In claim 4, line 3: "area.." should be changed to --work area--
 - b. In claim 6, line 1: "claim" should be changed to --clamp--
 - c. In claim 8, line 2: "Aabandonment and Rrecovery" should be changed to --abandonment and recovery--Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.
3. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The term "further trolley" as recited in the claim lacks basis in the original disclosure and represents new matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

5. Claims 1 and 4 - 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Stockstill (2003/0091395).

Regarding claims 1, 4, 5, 7, and 9 - 12, Stockstill discloses an apparatus comprising: a tower (52); a tensioner (unlabeled element shown above and below welding station 85 in Figs. 14A and 14B; also see tensioner 23 in Fig. 3); a pipeline (53); a radius controller (bend controller 21); a hold-off clamp (86), the clamp (86) mounted independently of the tower (52) on a trolley comprising a beam and two rails (87, 88) which can be moved into and out of alignment with the laying axis of the tower (52); and the trolley is provided with a work area (25) (Figs. 3, 14A, and 14B; paragraphs 0006, 0115, 0116, and 0127). Stockstill teaches rails (87, 88) attached to the vessel hull (paragraph 0136) and that clamp (86) travels along the rails between a first position where the clamp is aligned with the pipeline (53) and the tower (52) and a second position in which the clamp is not aligned with the pipeline and the tower (paragraph 0127). Relative movement between the clamp and the tower indicates that the clamp moves independently of the tower.

Regarding claim 6, Stockstill further discloses the clamp (86) is operable to at least one side of the lay axis (can move laterally along rails 87 and 88) and which allow clamp (86) to be operable forward and aft of the lay axis (Fig. 15).

Regarding claim 8, Stockstill further discloses an abandonment and recovery crane (paragraph 0029).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 2, 3, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stockstill in view of Fikes et al. (2002/0074125).

Regarding claims 2 and 13, Stockstill discloses all of the limitations of the above claim(s) except for the trolley moves the hold-off clamp in a direction transverse to the length of said beam and a further trolley. Fikes et al. teaches an opening in the platform (32) of a drilling rig having two sets of rails (52, 54), the first set of rails (52) is oriented perpendicularly to the second set of rails (54), the rails of each set positioned on opposite sides of the opening (Figs. 3 and 9; paragraph 0057) to allow drilling equipment to be moved in nearly any X-Y coordinate within the opening in order to maximize the use of available space on the platform. The second set of rails (54) is considered the "further trolley" as best understood by the examiner. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have modified the structure as disclosed by Stockstill with the first and second sets of rails as taught by Fikes et al. to allow drilling equipment to be moved in nearly any X-Y coordinate within the opening in order to maximize the use of available space on the platform.

Regarding claim 3, Stockstill further discloses a moon pool (18) that defines a working space (Fig. 4) and the opposite sides of the moon pool are equivalent to outriggers.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments filed 27 April 2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that it appears that the rails 87, 88 are mounted on the tower and accordingly not independently of the tower on the vessel. Applicant further argues that there is no teaching to suggest that the rails 87, 88 attached to the vessel hull 45 is intended to disclose that the hold-off clamp is mounted independently of the tower. Examiner responds that Stockstill teaches rails (87, 88) attached to the vessel hull (paragraph 0136) and that clamp (86) travels along the rails between a first position where the clamp is aligned with the pipeline (53) and the tower (52) and a second position in which the clamp is not aligned with the pipeline and the tower (paragraph 0127). Relative movement between the clamp and the tower indicates that the clamp moves independently of the tower.

Applicant argues that Stockstill does not disclose a “trolley on trolley” arrangement. Examiner notes that the claim limitation which applicant is arguing is new matter. Examiner replies that the second set of rails (54) is considered the “further trolley” as best understood by the examiner because the second set of rails (54) is oriented perpendicularly to the first set of rails (52). The perpendicular orientation of the two sets of rails allows the trolley to move in a direction parallel to a length of the beam and also in a direction transverse to the length of the beam.

Applicant argues that Stockstill fails to teach or suggest a clamp operable to at least one side of the lay axis and at least one of forward and aft of the lay axis. Examiner explains that Stockstill discloses the clamp (86) is operable to at least one side of the lay axis (can move

laterally along rails 87 and 88) and which allow clamp (86) to be operable forward and aft of the lay axis (Fig. 15). There is no limitation in the claims which precludes "one side of the lay axis" from being equivalent to "one of forward and aft of the lay axis". Therefore, moving clamp (86) to one side of the lay axis as disclosed by Stockstill could move the clamp (86) to a fore or aft location relative to the lay axis.

9. Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 2 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to SEAN D. ANDRISH whose telephone number is (571)270-3098. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri, 7:30am - 5:00pm, Alternate Fri off, EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bagnell can be reached on (571) 272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Sunil Singh/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3672

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SDA
7/22/2009